



Walking Home: A Traveler in the Alaskan Wilderness, a Journey into the Human Heart

Lynn Schooler

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In the spring of 2007, hard on the heels of the worst winter in the history of Juneau, Alaska, Lynn Schooler finds himself facing the far side of middle age and exhausted by laboring to handcraft a home as his marriage slips away. Seeking solace and escape in nature, he sets out on a solo journey into the Alaskan wilderness, traveling first by small boat across the formidable Gulf of Alaska, then on foot along one of the wildest coastlines in North America.

Walking Home is filled with stunning observations of the natural world, and rife with nail-biting adventure as Schooler fords swollen rivers and eludes aggressive grizzlies. But more important, it is a story about finding wholeness-and a sense of humanity-in the wild. His is a solitary journey, but Schooler is never alone; human stories people the landscape-tales of trappers, explorers, marooned sailors, and hermits, as well as the mythology of the region's Tlingit Indians. Alone in the middle of several thousand square miles of wilderness, Schooler conjures the souls of travelers past to learn how the trials of life may be better borne with the help and community of others.

Walking Home recalls Jonathan Raban's *Passage to Juneau* or Jon Krakauer's *Into the Wild*, but with a more successful outcome. With elegance and soul, Schooler creates a conversation between the human and the natural, the past and present, to investigate what it means to be a part of the flow of human history.

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